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ABSTRACT

This final report describes the activities and outcomes of a federally funded program that was designed to address the shortage of qualified early intervention personnel in rural areas of Kansas and adjacent states. Forty-seven early childhood special education (ECSE) students were supported with stipends during the three years of the project. Twenty-one students were endorsed in ECSE and 19 of them accepted positions in this field. Twenty-five students are now working with infants, toddlers, or young children with special needs. Twenty-one students were still in the program at the time this report was written. Six social work students were recruited and participated in the ECSE interdisciplinary program, and four of these students accepted employment in this field. Interdisciplinary team members from area practicum sites also received individual training, support, and evaluation to develop improved practicum experiences for the students in natural environments. The evaluation of the ECSE program graduates by employers during the 1999-2000 school year reflected means ranging from 4.25-4.5 on a scale of 1 (poor preparation) to 5 (excellent preparation). Ability to work effectively with families reflected a mean of 4.5. Dissemination information and budget information for the project is included. (Author/SG)

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EC309363

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COVER SHEET

U. S. Department of Education
GRANT PERFORMANCE REPORT

ED 472 295

1. PR/Award No. (e.g., H185A200211-95)
H029G970215-99
See Block 4 on your last Notification of Grant Award

2. Recipient Name and Address
Associated Colleges of Central Kansas
Dept. Of Special Education
210 South Main
McPherson, KS 67460
Unless address has changed, repeat from Block 1 on your last Notification of Grant Award

3. Project Title:
84.029G Grants for Pre-Service Personnel Training
This should be identical to the title of the approved application.

4. Contact Person:
Name: Marguerite A. Hornback, Ed.D
Title: Special Education Assistant Professor
Telephone Number: 620-241-5150
Fax Number: 620-241-5153
E-mail Address: amargyh@acck.edu
Provide the name and title of the project director or other individual who is most familiar with the content of the performance report. Also include telephone and fax numbers and E-mail address.

5. Performance Reporting Period:
Final Report
This is the time frame for information requested in Parts III, IV and V on project status and supplementary information/ changes. (See instructions for details.)

6. Current Budget Period
N/A
See Block 5 of your last Notification of Grant Award

Authorized Representative:
Name (Typed or printed): Dr. Ray Brown
Title: Executive Director
Signature: Ray C Brown
Date: 10/31/01

ED Form 524-B

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EC309363

ACCK Preservice Early Intervention Program
(a.k.a. The Plum Tree Project: ACCK Interdisciplinary Early Intervention Program)
#HO29G972015

Project Performance Report to U.S. Department of Education
April 1, 2000-August 31, 2001
and
Final Report

II. Project Summary

Currently we see evidence of a) a serious shortage in Kansas and adjacent states of personnel specifically trained to serve infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delay and their families, and b) inadequacies in current personnel preparation programs to provide students with knowledge and skills necessary for the critical family service coordination function. IDEA charges us to serve children from birth through two years of age in a manner which is comprehensive, coordinated, culturally-appropriate, family-centered, and suited to the developmental needs of individual children and their families. Qualified interventionists—in sufficient number, with targeted preparation in philosophy and strategies for the infant-toddler age group, and with knowledge and skills for rural family service coordination—are needed in Kansas and surrounding rural states to provide mandated services to our rapidly growing early intervention population. This nation's laudable goal of appropriate intervention services for all children and youth with disabilities from birth through age 21 must be grounded in qualified personnel equipped to meet diverse developmental needs within varied home, hospital, and classroom settings. Collaboration among representatives of diverse disciplines is essential to meeting congressional aims for IDEA Part C.

This project is being carried out within the context of ACCK's early childhood education, special education, and social work programs. ACCK is a consortium of six rural private colleges, including Bethany College at Lindsborg, Bethel College at North Newton, Kansas Wesleyan University at Salina, McPherson College at McPherson, Tabor College at Hillsboro, and Sterling College at Sterling, KS. The ACCK consortium has offered cooperative preparation programs in the three disciplines for more than 20 years, producing thousands of personnel for the rural central and western parts of Kansas and adjacent states. This project will help to address the severe shortage of qualified early intervention personnel in rural areas. It will train more than 12 additional early interventionists per year—at least 36 total—to provide quality services in natural environments for rural children aged 0-2 with special needs; it will enable quality family service coordination, and it will provide materials for other training institutions to do the same.

III. Project Status

This project has five objectives. Activities undertaken and results of those activities under each objective will be discussed below.

a) **To recruit highly promising students into a preservice specialization in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas and to give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to serve infants and toddlers with special needs and their families.**

The brochure developed by this project continues to be distributed widely as a recruitment tool. Twenty-six highly qualified ECSE students participated with stipends in personnel preparation in ECSE during 2000-2001. All had positive references from community or college leaders. These students ranged from freshmen through post-B.A. students. One of the ECSE students supported by this project was awarded the 2001 Kansas Division of Early Childhood (KDEC) outstanding student of the year award. Another was awarded most promising student of the year at Tabor College. These awards demonstrate the quality of students recruited into this program.

Nine ECSE students supported by this project completed the program in 2000. One accepted an ECSE position in Niagara Falls, NY; two accepted ECSE positions in Oklahoma; one accepted a position with Head Start in Marion County; one accepted a position with Parents as Teachers in McPherson; and the other four graduates accepted positions as ECSE teachers in western and central Kansas. Several of the graduates reported receiving 2-3 offers for employment in this field.

Seven ECSE students supported by this project completed the program in 2001. Six of the graduates accepted employment in the field of ECSE and one student accepted a grade 5 elementary education position in rural Stafford, KS. Eighteen ECSE students who received support through this project continue in the program. Of that eighteen, six are currently working in the field without complete endorsement.

Forty-seven ECSE students were supported with stipends during this three-year project. Twenty-one students were endorsed in ECSE and nineteen of them accepted positions in this field. Two accepted elementary education positions. Twenty-one ECSE students who received support through this project continue in the program. Seven of the twenty-one are working in the field using knowledge gained in ACCK course work while continuing to work toward full ECSE endorsement. Seven students dropped out or were advised out of the program before completing. One of the students advised out of the program accepted an ECSE paraeducator position. Three of the students took only one course before dropping out of the program. ACCK's ECSE program is demanding and requires a great deal of work and dedication. One of the students dropped because her

mother died, another student had a baby and decided to stay at home with her young children, and one student moved to California. The remaining student decided not to pursue ECSE endorsement.

Over the course of this three-year project, three of the stipend funded ECSE students have won national (DEC), state (KDEC), and local (Tabor College) awards. Twenty-five of these highly qualified stipend supported students are currently working with infants, toddlers, or young children with special needs. Approximately 15 ECSE students per year of the project were recruited into this ECSE training program.

b) **To recruit highly promising social work (SW) students and give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to work effectively in early intervention.**

The Plum Tree brochure is used for SW recruitment. Two presentations were made on college campuses in efforts to attract personnel to this developing field. In addition, the director of this project gave guest lectures in SW classes. One SW student participated fully in the program this year with stipend money. One SW student completed her course work in May 2000 and another in May 2001 and both accepted positions in this field. In addition, a SW student not funded by the project, but influenced by the increasing early childhood emphasis in the SW program, completed a practicum in one of the interdisciplinary ECSE settings and accepted employment in this field.

During this three-year project, six social work students participated in the ECSE interdisciplinary program. One of the social work students funded through this project dropped out of the SW program due to a family crisis and one social work student funded by this program continues in the interdisciplinary program. Four of the social work students funded through this project accepted employment in this field. In addition, a social work student not funded with stipend money accepted employment in this field due to the increased early childhood emphasis in the SW program. Approximately two SW students per year of the project were recruited into this interdisciplinary program.

c) **To develop improved practicum experiences in natural environments—including evaluation and support for the interdisciplinary teams at those sites—in order to prepare students to work effectively in early intervention.**

Many interdisciplinary team members from area practicum sites attended the four three-hour evening seminars and the three-day summer seminar (see descriptions in d below). A meeting for infant-toddler program personnel and parents of children with disabilities was held in June, 2000 to discuss practicum experiences in natural environments. The meeting was designed as an exchange of information. It was an opportunity for service providers and parents to give input into the structure and assignment requirements of students' practicum experiences

as well as for SW and ECSE faculty to discuss strategies to implement interdisciplinary best practices in natural environments.

Interdisciplinary teams also received individual training, support, and evaluation to develop improved practicum experiences in natural environments in order to prepare students to work effectively in early intervention. These teams included the MCKIDS infant toddler program in McPherson, KS; Rainbows United in Wichita, KS; KIDLINK in Stockton, KS; Marion County Early Intervention program in Marion, KS; Early Education Center in Hutchinson, KS; Salina Regional Health Center Infant Child Development program in Salina, KS; Brookcreek Learning Center in Lawrence, KS; Harvey County Early Intervention program, Newton, KS; Sunflower Early Education Center, Great Bend, KS; Southeast Kansas Birth to Three program in Parsons, KS; Prairie View in Newton, KS; and Via Christi St. Francis, pediatric section, Wichita, KS. The type of training and support was individualized depending on needs of the practicum sites. Preservice students in this program were placed at each of these sites.

d) To develop interdisciplinary course work, seminar experiences, and practica to guide ECSE students in family service coordination and SW students in practices appropriate for families of infants and toddlers with special needs.

The Foundations of Early Childhood Intervention and *Family, School, and Community Relationships for Early Childhood Professional* courses were co-taught by SW and ECSE faculty. SW faculty placed and supervised students in a family practicum associated with the latter class. An interterm class was co-taught by a speech-language pathologist and ECSE faculty. Guest speaking continued with SW faculty in ECSE courses and ECSE faculty in SW courses.

Community professionals and parents of children with disabilities and preservice students continued to have input into the implementation of interdisciplinary course work, seminar experiences, and practica through a variety of formal and informal contacts. Program evaluation is an ongoing component of the interdisciplinary program at ACCK.

Results from an ECSE cooperating teacher survey is compiled each year to determine strengths and needs of our interdisciplinary student teaching component. Survey results from 1998-99 had means on survey answers to questions asked ECSE cooperating teachers about ACCK's effectiveness in preparing students ranging from 4.111-4.667 on a scale of 1=poor to 5=excellent. In 1999-2000 means ranged from 4.0-4.6 and 2000-2001 from 4.25-4.889.

The evaluation of ECSE program graduates by employers during the 1999-2000 school year reflected means ranging from 4.25-4.5 on a scale of 1 (poor preparation) to 5 (excellent preparation). Ability to work effectively with families reflected a mean of 4.5.

Students complete the evaluation of courses each year through a confidential questionnaire. The evaluation of the interdisciplinary *Foundations of Early Childhood Intervention* course in 1998 had means on each question ranging from 2.737 (amount of work required) to 3.737 on a scale of 1=poor to 4=excellent. In 1999 means ranged from 3.545 (amount of reading required) to 4.455 on a scale of 1=poor to 5=excellent. In 2000 means ranged from 2.67 (amount of work required) to 4.5. The students' evaluation of the interdisciplinary course *Family, School, and Community Relationships for Early Childhood Professionals* in 2000 had means ranging from 4.167 (amount of work required) to 5.0. In 2001, means ranged from 4.250 to 5.0. The students' evaluation of the interdisciplinary course, *Methods for Facilitating Infant Development,* in summer 1999 had means ranging from 3.429 (amount of work required) to 4.0 on a scale of 1-4. In Fall 1999 it had means ranging from 3.667 to 5.0 on a scale of 1-5. In 2000, it had means ranging from 3.818 (amount of work required) to 4.909. Evaluation data from students indicated that ACCK's interdisciplinary ECSE program is demanding, but worthwhile.

The three-day summer seminar for 2000 was attended by 53 students and interdisciplinary team members. On June 5, 2000 the topic was *Building Supportive Communities to Promote Infant Mental Health* presented by Edward Feinberg, M.D. On June 6 the topic was *Promoting Family/Infant Attachment to Support Infant Mental Health and Brain Development* presented by Edward L. Hoffman, M.D. The topic for June 7 was *Developing Healthy Relationships Through Play* presented by Richard Gaskill, Ed.D.

The three-day summer seminar for 2001 was interactive and designed to meet the needs of students and interdisciplinary team members who were participants in this project. Attendees were by invitation only. The topic was *In Touch Again: A Multisensory Therapeutic Approach for Children and Adults With Attachment and Bonding Issues.* Six nationally known therapists trained invited participants in this hands-on approach. The therapists from Texas and Minnesota included Nancy Hawkins, Ellen Saul, Rich Hatfield, Mary Ann Dressel, Celeste Pennington, and Kathryn Sackett.

The four three-hour evening seminars for 2000-2001 were *KITS: What It Can Do For You!, Conflict Resolution in the Workplace, New Directions in Family Service Coordination,* and *Methods for Facilitating the Development of Young Children with Visual Impairments in Natural Environments.* One hundred sixty nine students and interdisciplinary team members attended these seminars.

Attendee evaluations of the summer and evening seminars over the course of the project were high and some of the comments included on the evaluations forms are noted:

- "So many resources at my fingertips! It is encouraging to know there is help out there!"

- "I would like to recommend to Carolyn [Part C Coordinator for Kansas, KDHE] that all Part C Coordinators sit in on this training or view the video. I noticed it was taped."
- "I have just started a field placement where I will be dealing with children and families in situations just like the ones you mentioned. "
- "Practical"
- "The sequential service idea discussed in the afternoon works well with the strength perspective in social work."
- "Knows what he is talking about. He is in our shoes!"
- "Loved the stories. Will remember the lessons from them."
- "I'm going to implement this with the children I see."
- "Strategies for working with families were great!"
- "What I am taking with me today will be a part of me forever."
- "I just hope I can remember everything so I can put it into practice now!"
- "This seminar was so full of practical ideas to use with children."
- "I feel I have gained much and will use these ideas in my classroom!!!"

Evaluation of summer and evening seminars by ACCK graduates using a scale of 1=poor preparation to 5= excellent preparation in 1998-99 were a mean of 5.0 for summer seminars and 4.80 for evening seminars. In 1999-2000 summer seminars received a mean of 4.250 for summer and evening seminars.

e) To participate in state and national systems for cooperative planning and dissemination in order both to share a validated, innovative model and to match program graduates with early intervention vacancies.

ACCK continues to participate in the Kansas Recruitment and Retention in Special Education Project. In addition, there is a bulletin board at ACCK available to graduates of the program where position vacancies are posted. Every year there have been more requests from employers for program graduates than there are program graduates. Students have reported receiving two and three job offers from which to choose. Graduate placement data is high as discussed in a) above.

Dissemination efforts have been varied. In Fall 2000, ECSE faculty presented at the DEC Conference in Arizona. In Spring 2001, SW faculty presented two sessions at the KDEC Conference in Kansas City. SW faculty have one presentation planned and accepted for the 2002 KDEC conference in Wichita. Dr. Sharon Rosenkoetter's article, *An undergraduate capstone experience to promote leadership in early childhood education,* was published in the *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education,* 22 (2001) 39-46. This article describes the interdisciplinary course, *Family, School, and Community Relationships for Early Childhood Professionals. Family Service Coordination: A guide for families and*

service providers is in its final stages for publication this summer. This guide, developed for use in the field or as a classroom supplement, will be distributed throughout Kansas by the Kansas Inservice Training System and made available to other states through ACCK. There are also plans for submitting a joint proposal (SW and ECSE) for the 2002 Midwest Faculty Institute in Kansas City, MO. Syllabi for the interdisciplinary courses can be shared with other IHE programs through this forum.

IV. Budget Information

Budget information for the three-year project is attached to this report.

V. Supplemental Information Changes

Teresa Strausz resigned her part-time position as SW faculty, and efforts to replace her with another qualified Social Worker with experience in infant toddler special education settings were unproductive. Teresa accepted a full-time position with the School to Community program in Newton, Kansas. She did decide to continue to co-teach the *Family, School, and Community Relationships for Early Childhood Professionals* course and supervise the associated family practicum on an adjunct basis. Julie Willems, administrative assistant, also resigned her part-time position. The duties associated with these positions were assumed by a variety of professionals already working on the project. Cynthia Shotts accepted a .33 time position working with practicum sites on family service coordination issues and training. She also compiled family service coordination materials for use in interdisciplinary classes and worked with arranging and coordinating evening seminars. SW faculty at Bethany and Bethel co-taught courses, helped supervise practicum placements, and worked with interdisciplinary practicum sites. Glenda Robertson, the ACCK special education secretary, assumed some of the administrative assistant duties. Money not expended in the salary and fringe benefits category was utilized for student stipends, in accord with the Department's wishes and project objectives.

Staff turnover created a challenge for the project, but did not adversely affect the outcomes of the project. A few students dropped out of the program after receiving initial stipends. This was unavoidable and due to a variety of circumstances.

Plum Tree Grant			1555 Budget				
Account Code	Account Name	% of total	Approved Budget	Spent as 8/31/01	Encumber	Balance	% Encumber or spent
7000	Personnel	28.7%	116,868.00	109,594.35		7,273.65	93.8%
7006	Fringe Benefits	6.9%	28,082.00	18,724.04	0.00	9,357.96	66.7%
7025	Student Stipends	55.6%	226,322.00	242,953.61		(16,631.61)	107.3%
7128	Supplies	0.7%	2,900.00	2,900.00		0.00	100.0%
7499	Other	4.8%	19,575.00	19,575.00		0.00	100.0%
7600	Indirect Expense	3.3%	13,365.00	13,365.00		0.00	100.0%
	Total		407,112.00	407,112.00	0.00	0.00	100.0%
	In additional cost saving measures:						
	$ 16,631.61 was moved from Salaries and Fringe Benefits to						
	Student Stipends.						
	This resulted in 4.1% decrease in Personnel line for a total 59.7% of grant						
	spent on Student stipends cost						

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ACCK Preservice Early Intervention Program
(a.k.a. The Plum Tree Project: ACCK Interdisciplinary Early Intervention Program)
#HO29G972015

Project Performance Report to U.S. Department of Education
March 30, 1999-April 2000

II. Project Summary

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III. Project Status

This project has five objectives. Activities undertaken and results of those activities under each objective will be discussed below.

a) To recruit highly promising students into a preservice specialization in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas and to give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to serve infants and toddlers with special needs and their families.

The brochure developed for this project continues to be distributed widely as a recruitment tool. Six presentations were made this year on campuses in efforts to attract applicants. Twenty-three highly qualified ECSE students participated with stipends in personnel preparation in ECSE during the 1999-2000 school year. All had positive references from community or college leaders and ranged from freshmen through post-B.A. students. One of ACCK's students and a stipend recipient, won the Kathleen McCarten Award for student of the year at the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) conference in Washington, D.C. in December, 1999. This is a highly competitive award category and demonstrates the quality of students recruited into this program.

Five ECSE students supported by this project graduated in 1999 and accepted positions in this field.

b) To recruit highly promising social work (SW) students and give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to work effectively in early intervention.

The Plum Tree brochure is also used for SW recruitment. Two presentations were made on college campuses in efforts to attract personnel to this developing field. In addition, the director of this project gave guest lectures in social work classes on early childhood development and using MAPS (the McGill Action Planning System) to identify family's needs, resources, and priorities for a child with disabilities.

Teresa Strausz, was hired part time as SW faculty member for this project during 1999-2000. Teresa had training and experience in school SW and also accepted a part-time position with the infant-toddler services program in McPherson. Teresa helped with advisement on Bethany and Bethel College campuses, and made presentations in several of the SW classes.

Social Work and ECSE faculty met for a one-day retreat in January 2000. One of the topics for this meeting was recruiting additional SW students into the program. We do not foresee as many social work students as education students entering the program. ACCK's social work programs are smaller than its education programs and social work is lifespan in scope.

The two SW students funded by this program who completed their course work in 1999 accepted positions in this field. During the 1999-2000 year, the program funded three SW students.

c) **To develop improved practicum experiences in natural environments—including evaluation and support for the interdisciplinary teams at those sites—in order to prepare students to work effectively in early intervention.**

Teresa Strausz and Gretchen Conway worked with potential practicum sites to develop their willingness and suitability to become part of this project. McPherson Infant Toddler Services was added to the list of interdisciplinary practicum sites with the addition of Teresa Strausz as a part time social worker in their program. Salina Infant Toddler Services hired two full time social workers on their staff to accommodate their and ACCK's program needs and this program was also added to the list of interdisciplinary practicum sites. Community personnel have attended our program seminars (see d below) in large numbers to improve their skills in the areas featured. Training, resources, and support have been provided to programs to meet their individual needs to improve their interdisciplinary practices.

A meeting for infant-toddler program personnel and parents of children with disabilities is planned for summer 2000 to discuss practicum experiences in natural environments. The meeting is designed as an opportunity for an exchange of information. Service providers and parents will provide input into the structure and assignment requirements of students' practica experiences and discuss strategies to implement interdisciplinary best practices in natural environments with ECSE program faculty.

d) **To develop interdisciplinary course work, seminar experiences, and practica to guide ECSE students in family service coordination and SW students in practices appropriate for families of infants and toddlers with special needs.**

A core class in Infant-Toddler Methods was co-taught with SW and ECSE faculty in summer 1999. With the implementation of a new curriculum for ECSE in Fall 2000 that included expanded field experiences and more interdisciplinary activities, there were many changes in how courses were structured and taught.

The *Foundations of Early Childhood Intervention* and *Family, School, and Community Relationships for Early Childhood Professionals* courses were co-taught by SW and ECSE faculty. SW faculty placed and supervised students in a family practicum associated with the latter course. An interterm class was co-taught by a speech-language pathologist and ECSE faculty. Guest speaking continued with SW faculty in ECSE courses and ECSE faculty in SW courses. SW and ECSE faculty are continuing to build skills for teaching collaboratively

through a variety of educational activities including attending the Early Childhood Conference (DEC) in Washington, DC.

A three-day summer seminar, a three-day interdisciplinary seminar, and four three-hour seminars were conducted during this school year. The summer seminar for 1999 included a two-day presentation, *Augmentative Communication and Adaptive Play for Infants, Toddlers and Young Children* by Linda Burkhart and a one-day presentation, *Assessment, Diagnosis and Intervention of Children with Autistic Spectrum and Related Developmental Disorders*, by Dr. Serena Wieder. Both presenters are nationally known speakers. Eighty-eight students and professionals in the field attended the three-day seminar.

The three-day interdisciplinary seminar was co-sponsored by ACCK, Kansas Infant-Toddler Services, Head Start, Kansas Inservice Training System, Kansas Parents as Teachers, Kansas Special Health Services, Salina Regional Health Center, and the United Methodist Health Foundation. This seminar was designed for child development specialists, parent educators, early interventionists, nurses, maternal and infant health personnel, social workers, family service coordinators, and preservice students. Over 200 area professionals and students attended the seminar, *After Loss ... Supporting the Parenting Experience*.

The four three-hour evening seminars were *The Parenting Experience of Pregnancy*, *Recent Advances in Diagnosing and Treating Autism Spectrum Disorder*, *Supporting the Mental Health of Adoptive Families*, and *Taking Care of the Caregiver*. Over 400 students, parents of children with disabilities, and interdisciplinary team members attended these seminars.

Community professionals and parents of children with disabilities and preservice students continue to have input into the implementation of interdisciplinary course work, seminar experiences, and practica through a variety of formal and informal contacts. Program evaluation is an ongoing component of the interdisciplinary program at ACCK.

e) To participate in state and national systems for cooperative planning and dissemination in order both to share a validated, innovative model and to match program graduates with early intervention vacancies.

Two ECSE faculty members presented on interdisciplinary activities at conferences this year. One faculty member presented at the DEC Conference in Washington, DC in 1999 and one presented at the Kansas DEC Conference in Wichita, Kansas in February 2000. We anticipate more active dissemination during year three of the project.

ACCK is taking part in the Recruitment and Retention project in Kansas. This project is beneficial in matching program graduates with early intervention vacancies through the KSDE website where vacancies are posted. Students can

apply online one time and send their application to multiple, potential employers. Also through this project, school districts in central and western Kansas have collaboratively hired a person whose job is full-time recruitment of special education teachers. This person has visited with faculty at ACCK and helps match potential graduates with vacancies in the area.

IV. Budget Information

We have requested a carryover of $1, 903.37 from the 1999 budget. This sum has been integrated into a new budget (FY 99 carryover plus FY 00) that is included. We are primarily using this carryover amount for stipends for students, in accord with the Department's wishes and project objectives. In addition, we have requested to continue to carryover the $95,773 from year one to year three. This was previously approved and pre-planned with OSEP during project negotiations.

V. Supplemental Information Changes

In August 1999, Marguerite Hornback replaced Sharon Rosenkoetter as Project Director. Sharon accepted a position in Oregon and Marguerite was hired as interim Early Childhood Program Coordinator at ACCK. Teresa Strausz was hired part-time as the SW faculty member on this grant in August 1999 and Jo Ann Mattison replaced Annie Moran on October 19, 1999 as ACCK's accounting personnel.

Gretchen Conway continues to serve as ECSE Practicum Coordinator and Julie Willems as Administrative Assistant. Dr. Ray Brown also continues as the Executive Director and chief financial officer for our consortium.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR YEAR THREE (REVISED 12/31/99)
#H029G70215

Personnel	$ 40,713.
Fringe Benefits	$ 9,795.
Supplies	$ 900.
Other	$ 5,900.
Indirect Expense	$ 4,585.

TOTAL OF DIRECT COSTS MINUS STUDENT SUPPORT	$ 61,893.	
STUDENT STIPENDS	$ 75,714.	
TOTAL BUDGET FOR YEAR 3	$ 137,607.	
TOTAL AMOUNT COMMITTED FROM FEDERAL FUNDS FOR YEAR 3		$ 135,704.
* PLUS CARRY-OVER REQUESTED FROM YEAR TWO		$ 1,903.
TOTAL USDOE FUNDS TO ACCK FOR YEAR THREE		$ 137,607.

* Additional Carry over amount from Year 1 of $ 95,773. to extend the grant from 1/01/2001 to 6/01/01 approved 2/17/99 by Ray Miner.

ACCK Preservice Early Intervention Program

(a.k.a. The Plum Tree Project: ACCK Interdisciplinary Early Intervention Program)
#HO29G972015

Project Performance Report to U.S. Department of Education
April 1999

II. Project Summary

Currently we see evidence of a) a serious shortage in Kansas and adjacent states of personnel specifically trained to serve infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delay and their families, and b) inadequacies in current personnel preparation programs to provide students with knowledge and skills necessary for the critical family service coordination function. IDEA charges us to serve children from birth through two years of age in a manner which is comprehensive, coordinated, culturally-appropriate, family-centered, and suited to the developmental needs of individual children and their families. Qualified interventionists--in sufficient number, with targeted preparation in philosophy and strategies for the infant-toddler age group, and with knowledge and skills for rural family service coordination--are needed in Kansas and surrounding rural states to provide mandated services to our rapidly growing early intervention population. This nation's laudable goal of appropriate intervention services for all children and youth with disabilities from birth through age 21 must be grounded in qualified personnel equipped to meet diverse developmental needs within varied home, hospital, and classroom settings. Collaboration among representatives of diverse disciplines is essential to meeting congressional aims for IDEA Part C.

The project is being carried out within the context of ACCK's early childhood education, special education, and social work programs. ACCK is a consortium of six rural private colleges, including Bethany College at Lindsborg, Bethel College at Newton, Kansas Wesleyan University at Salina, McPherson College at McPherson, Tabor College at Hillsboro, and Sterling College at Sterling, KS. The ACCK consortium has offered cooperative preparation programs in the three disciplines for more than 20 years, producing thousands of personnel for the rural central and western parts of Kansas and adjacent states. This project will help to address the severe shortage of qualified early intervention personnel in rural areas. It will train more than 12 additional early interventionists per year-- at least 36 in total-- to provide quality services in natural environments for rural children aged 0-2 with special needs; it will enable quality family service coordination, and it will provide materials for other training institutions to do the same.

III. Project Status

Planning occurred during Spring 1998, and the first students entered in Fall 1998.

This project has five objectives. Activities undertaken and results of those activities under each objective will be discussed below.

a) To recruit highly promising students into a preservice specialization in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas and to give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to serve infants and toddlers with special needs and their families. Twenty-nine highly qualified ECSE students participated with stipends in personnel preparation in ECSE during the 1998-99 school year. Their mean grade point was 3.63 on a 1-4 scale. All had positive references from community or college leaders. These students range from freshmen through post-B.A. students. One was a member of an under-represented group. Five additional ECSE students have already been accepted for next year (most will continue), and applications from six more are pending approval. A brochure to explain the project was developed and continues to be distributed widely as a recruitment tool. Five presentations were made this year on campuses in efforts to attract additional applicants.

Five ECSE student supported by this project completed the program this year and are currently seeking employment. Ten others who are not yet credentialed are, nevertheless, working in the field, using skills gained from this program while they continue their educations. It is worth noting that the attrition rate for ECSE teachers in Kansas last year was 9.8%, so it is likely that they will quickly be hired either in those jobs or the many new ones that are being created for individuals with their skills in Early Head Start, Head Start, or Healthy Start Plus.

b) To recruit highly promising social work (SW) students and give them the disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies to work effectively in early intervention. Two social work students with grade points above 3.0 participated fully in the program this year with stipend money; three others took interdisciplinary classes that the grant program made possible. All five of the SW students received positive references from college faculty. ACCK's social work programs are smaller than its education programs, and social work is lifespan in scope. We do not foresee as many social work students as education students entering the program, but we do anticipate that the social work component will grow as the project becomes better known. Three new SW students have applied to participate next year. The same Plum Tree brochure is used for both ECSE and SW recruitment. Two presentations were made on college campuses in efforts to attract personnel to this developing field.

Two SW students funded by this program completed their course work this year. One has found employment in the field, and the other is currently interviewing.

c) To develop improved practicum experiences in natural environments--including evaluation and support for the interdisciplinary teams at those sites--in order to prepare students to work effectively in early intervention. Program staff are working with potential practicum sites to develop their willingness and suitability to work with us. Many birth to three programs are exploring collaborative services across funding streams at this time, and faculty are heavily involved in technical assistance to these programs to encourage quality outcomes. One blended program explained its approach to the Management Team. Community personnel have attended our program seminars (see d) below) in large numbers to improve their skills in the areas featured.

A challenge experienced in developing new practica for social work students derived from our difficulty in hiring a SW faculty member for the amount of time proposed in the grant. Three rounds of interviews did not allow us to locate a person who could do the job. This is not a rare dilemma for part-time professional jobs in a very rural area. Accordingly, we hired various people to accomplish the tasks of the position (teaching, class presentations, advisement, training of Management Team, etc.). None of these individuals was comfortable enough with both early intervention and our colleges to do the practicum site development beyond two programs (the same number of students who needed placements this year). However, we have been fortunate to locate an outstanding person, trained in School SW, who will be joining our grant program during the next academic year (actual year two of three years). Teresa Strausz's vita is appended to this report. A hidden benefit of our Year 1 dilemma is that the social workers who came to our aid last year are committed to the project and will continue to contribute by class presentations, mentoring students, and means.

d) To develop interdisciplinary course work, seminar experiences, and practica to guide ECSE students in family service coordination and SW students in practices appropriate for families of infants and toddlers with special needs. Once interdisciplinary class was team-taught last fall by a SW, an ECSE, and a nurse. Another, during interterm in January featured a speech-language pathologist and an ECSE. A core class this summer will be led by a SW and and ECSE. Faculty are building skills for teaching collaboratively.

Four three-hour seminars were conducted during this school year: a) A Creative Arts Approach to Growing Young Children: Lessons from Reggio Emilia, Italy; b) Humor, Celebration, and Other Coping Strategies for Families of Young Children--and for the Service Providers Who Work with Them; c) Recognizing Physical and Sexual Abuse in Infants and Young Children; Supporting the Children and Their Families; and d) Navigating the Resource Maze: A Simulation. The first three seminars featured nationally or regionally known speakers, and were attended by 100-175 persons each. The fourth event involved volunteers from 35 state and local agencies, who played themselves as seminar participants took the roles of family members with young children with disabilities. The goal of the evening was to resolve challenging dilemmas by accessing new and varied community resources. Participants reported that they learned a great deal, both about the agencies' services directly and about the feelings of family members confronting very difficult and puzzling situations

During this school year the governance of ACCK approved a new curriculum for ECSE, which will involve considerably more field experience and more interdisciplinary activities than the previous curriculum. Broad-based input into the curriculum development was received from practitioners, administrators, parents of children with disabilities, and college students. Program personnel have been working actively to bring the new curriculum into being, and community professionals continue to advise and shape a program to produce the kind of colleagues they want to see.

e) To participate in state and national systems for cooperative planning and dissemination in order both to share a validated, innovative model and to match program graduates with early intervention vacancies. SW and EC/ECSE faculty made visits and heard

speakers to guide our work. We also participated in state and national meetings to build our knowledge and skills. One faculty member presented on interdisciplinary activities at the International Division for Early Childhood Conference in Chicago lat December, and another conference presentation is anticipated for the same conference in 1999 in Washington, DC. We anticipate more active dissemination during years two and three of the project.

IV. Budget Information

As was pre-planned with OSEP, we are expending only about half of the funds targeted for any budget year because the project actually started working with new staff and students in Fall 98, not January 98, when the first grant year began; now, four months into the second project year, we are finishing spending the funds from the first project year. We anticipate requesting carry over of funds amounting to at least half of the total funds appropriated again this year. As agreed upon informally during project negotiations, this project will range over approximately 3 ½ years, rather than the three years on the grant award. Few funds were expended during the first six month of the first project year, and the actual three program years will occur during the present and the next two academic years. That time line certainly fits better than a January through December plan for largely undergraduate students participating in an academic year calendar, which is September through June. It also worked better for hiring staff, which tend, in rural areas, to follow academic year calendars.

The projected budget for next year appears on the following page.

ACCK Preservice Early Intervention Program -- #HO29G70215
BUDGET SUMMARY
Budget Categories for Third Project Year

	ACCK	FEDERAL
Personnel	95,246.	35,326.
Project Director Rosenkoetter		
ECSE Practicum Coordinator Conway		
Social Work Field Coordinator Teresa Strausz		
Social Work Faculty Friesen, Schmidt-Tieszen, Presley, Norlin		
Special Education Chair Scott		
Special Education Librarian Zerger		
ECSE Faculty Shotts, Schulte, Hopp-Edwards, Lay		
ECE Faculty , Smith		
SLP Faculty Hulstine, Holt		
Nursing Faculty Kissell, Thorn		
Administrative Assistant Willems		
Secretary Robertson		
Computer Support Doughty		
Executive Director/Financial Officer Brown		
Accounting Moran		
Public Relations Warren		
Fringe Benefits	22,859.	7984.
Equipment		1,000.
Supplies	5,000.	1,100.
General Supplies		
Brochure		
Handbook for Summer Seminar		
Contractual		400.
Parent Consultant		
Construction		
Travel		
Other	17,000.	9,918.
Honoraria and Materials for Site Teams		
Instate Travel for Faculty		
Student Travel		
Presenter Expenses for Summer Seminar		
Postage		
Professional Development (staff)		
TOTAL OF ABOVE COSTS	137,789.	55,728.
INDIRECT COSTS FOR ABOVE (8%)	11,023.	4,458.
STUDENT STIPENDS		75,518.
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	148,812.	135,704.

V. Supplemental Information Changes

Kansas continues to work very actively on redrawing its certification/licensure process, levels, and standards for teachers. If current plans are approved by all the requisite bodies, there will soon be one license for all educators of children from birth through age eight, including both those with special needs and those who are typically developing. ACCK faculty have been active in all stages of the redesign process, including sponsoring public hearings on our campus. The Kansas State Board of Education is presently slated to approve or disapprove of the plan within the next six months. If these changes occur, ACCK will need to examine all teacher education programs on our six campuses as will as the consortium's Department of Special Education. During this year we have continued to explore how altered licensure, a move to an outcomes accreditation process, conditional licensure prior to experience, and other potential changes should affect ACCK's student preparation and course offerings. Our faculty has begun to apply the proposed new standards. This difficult but important work will continue during the rest of the project.

Gretchen Conway continues to serve as ECSE Practicum Coordinator and Dr. Sharon Rosenkoetter as Director for this project. Julie Willems functions as Administrative Assistant, with responsibilities especially in the area of seminars. As mentioned above, Teresa Strausz will join us in August as Social Work Field Coordinator. Annie Moran is the new bookkeeper/accountant for ACCK. Finally, Dr. Ray Brown became Executive Director of ACCK and chief financial officer for our consortium last July and is affording excellent institutional leadership for our work.

Active components of the Plum Tree include interdisciplinary faculty learning; recruitment of students; personnel development through course work, special seminars, and conference attendance; placement of graduates; improvement of the ACCK preparation programs; development and enhancement of practicum sites; and dissemination to other institutions of the country. Considerable success has been experienced in all components of the project. In the time remaining in the grant project, ACCK hopes to continue student preparation and placement as at present, to develop new ways of assessing student outcomes, and to continue moving our early childhood personnel preparation programs in directions consistent with recommended practices. This triple challenge is significant, but we believe that it can be met.

Teresa L. Strausz, L.M.S.W.

17 Main Street
Osage City, Kansas 66523

(785) 528-3755

Work History

8/97-present *School Social Worker, Wabaunsee East USD #330*
Perform duties such as conducting social histories, making home visits, providing individual and group counseling, coordinating evaluations and reevaluations for special education students, attending in-service trainings, and providing information and support to school staff. Coordinate functional behavioral assessments and conduct necessary observations, interviews and documentation for such. Assist in the review and revision of district-wide crisis plan. Assist in the development and monitoring of school truancy and attendance policy. Attend all meetings regarding special service students to ensure compliance with Federal and State special education regulations. Network and collaborate with various community resources including mental health, health, court, SRS, foster care, and alternative education settings.

9/96-6/97 *Therapist, Mental Health Center of East Central Kansas*
Provided social work and clinical services to children and their families. Worked with individual clients, families, and children by providing therapeutic intervention and support using a variety of modalities. Facilitated group sessions, conducted intake assessments, utilized play therapy techniques, and assisted in parenting skills training.

8/95-4/96 *Social Work Intern, Family Service and Guidance Center*
Provided social work and clinical services within the Early Parenting Program. Worked with individual clients, families, and children providing therapeutic intervention and support through individual and group processes. Gained experience using play therapy with children. Worked closely with various community systems including judicial, social service, educational, and health. Co-facilitated group for adults to enhance their parenting skills.

8/95-5/96 *Unit Coordinator, Menninger Hospital*
Assisted in the coordination of two inpatient units, preparing charts for admissions, maintaining filing system, scheduling patient appointments, and carrying out physician's orders. This position required much self-direction and ability to operate in a quick-paced and often crisis-responsive environment.

1/95-8/95 *Receptionist, Menninger Clinic*
Greeted consumers and families, performed receptionist duties, patient billing, and staff scheduling. This position required the ability to interact with patients and their families as they faced stressful times related to receiving mental health

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services. In addition, there was much responsibility and the need for independent thinking and performance.

9/93-4/94 *Social Work Intern, Northeast Kansas Education Service Center*
Performed duties related to the field of social work in the schools. Worked professionally with colleagues in various fields such as counseling, psychology, and administration. Provided social work services to students identified for special education, as well as their families. Coordinated needed services from community agencies. Conducted social work assessments, interviewed families, and gathered information for reports and staffings. Provided written documentation of all aspects of this work.

5/92-5/93 *Student Coordinator and Office Assistant, Fort Hays State University*
Hired on scholarship to assist in the coordination of the campus peer assistance program and perform all duties related to its implementation and coordination. Worked with various university administrators, coordinated volunteer trainings and staffings, and coordinated the recruitment of volunteers. Worked as office support staff training new employees, making appointments, providing services for students with disabilities and special needs, and worked with supervisor to manage the office.

Education

1993-1994, 1995-1996 Masters in Social Work, University of Kansas
1990-1993 Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with Minor in Sociology, Fort Hays State University
1989-1990 Psychology major, Emporia State University
1985-1989 Honors Diploma, Newton (KS) High School

Professional Interests, Activities, Honors

NASW member (1996-1998)
Christian Education Board Member, Southern Hills Mennonite Church (1998-present)
Mentoring Program volunteer, Southern Hills Mennonite Church (1998-present)
Olive Branch Board Member (1995)
Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society (1993-1994)
Magna cum Laude graduate (1993)
Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer (1992-1993)
PLATO—peer assistance program at FHSU—coordinator and volunteer (1992-1993)
Psychology Club, FHSU—member, Vice-President, President (1991-1993)
Alpha Kappa Delta Honor Society, FHSU (1991-1993)
Outstanding Senior Scholar, FHSU Psychology Dept. (1992)

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Professional References

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